

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Ken Green on March 13, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Cancel claims 61 and 64.

43. A breast cup assembly comprising:
- a bottle attachment end for connecting to a vacuum source;
 - a large open end opposite the bottle attachment end for accepting a woman's breast;
 - a holder comprising:
 - a small end residing proximal to the bottle attachment end of the breast cup assembly and including a holder engaging feature;
 - a large end opposite the small end and having a larger diameter than the small end; and
 - a center portion connecting the small end to the large end, the center portion having at least one cut out ~~air-path~~ passing radially through the holder to allow free movement inside the holder;
 - a single layer breast cup made of biocompatible material and supported inside the holder, the breast cup having an inner surface exposed to the vacuum source and an outer surface exposed to atmospheric pressure, the breast cup sequentially comprising:
 - a connecting portion residing proximal to the bottle attachment end of the breast cup assembly and including a cup engaging feature engaged by the holder engaging feature of the small end of the holder for retaining the breast cup in the holder; the connecting portion connectable to the vacuum source;
 - a cylindrical middle area formed contiguous to the connecting portion, and configured for receiving a teat of a breast and having a first thickness; and
 - a cone shaped portion formed contiguous to the middle area, and configured for receiving a portion of the breast, the cone shaped portion increasing in diameter away from the middle area to the large open end, and supported proximal to the large open end by the large end of the holder, the cone shaped portion having a second thickness,
 - wherein the second thickness is less than the first thickness so that upon application of vacuum to the connecting portion the cone shaped portion distorts before the mid portion distorts.

46. The breast cup assembly of Claim 43, wherein:

the center portion of the holder comprises at least two ribs connecting the small end to the large end; and

gaps between the ribs provide the cut out ~~the air path passing through the~~ holder to allow free movement of the breast cup inside the holder.

55. A breast cup assembly comprising:

a bottle attachment end for connecting to a vacuum source;

a large open end opposite the bottle attachment end for accepting a woman's breast;

a holder comprising:

a round cross-section small end residing proximal to the bottle attachment end of the breast cup assembly and including an internal passage with a forward facing ridge face;

a round cross-section large end opposite the small end and having a larger diameter than the small end; and

a center portion connecting the small end to the large end, the center portion having at least one cut out ~~air path~~ passing radially through the holder to allow free movement inside the holder;

a single layer breast cup made of biocompatible material and supported inside the holder, the breast cup having an inner surface exposed to the vacuum source and an outer surface exposed to atmospheric pressure, the breast cup sequentially comprising;

a connecting portion residing proximal to the bottle attachment end of the breast cup assembly and supported by the small end of the holder and including a fastening wedge tapering small to the front of the breast cup and including a rearward facing wedge face; the connecting portion for connecting to the vacuum source;

a cylindrical middle area formed adjacent to the connecting portion, and configured for receiving a teat of a breast; and

a cone shaped portion formed adjacent to the middle area, and configured for receiving a portion of the breast, the cone shaped portion increasing in diameter away from the mid portion to the large open end, and supported proximal to the large open end by the large end of the holder,

wherein the breast cup assembly is formed by inserting the breast cup into the holder wherein the fastening wedge catches on the complementary ridge to retain the breast cup in the holder.

57. The breast cup assembly of Claim 56, wherein:

the center portion of the holder comprises at least two ribs connecting the small end to the large end; and

gaps between the ribs provide the cut out ~~the air path passing through the~~ holder to allow free movement of the breast cup inside the holder.

60. A breast cup assembly comprising:

a bottle attachment end for connecting to a vacuum source;

a large open end opposite the bottle attachment end for accepting a woman's breast;

a holder comprising:

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a round cross-section small end residing proximal to the bottle attachment end of the breast cup assembly; a round cross-section large end opposite the small end and having a larger diameter than the small end; and

a center portion connecting the small end to the large end, the center portion having at least one cut out ~~air-path~~ passing radially through the holder to allow free movement inside the holder;

a single layer breast cup made of biocompatible material and supported inside the holder, the breast cup having an inner surface exposed to the vacuum source and an outer surface exposed to atmospheric pressure, the breast cup sequentially comprising;

a connecting portion residing proximal to the bottle attachment end of the breast cup assembly and insertable into the small end of the holder, wherein the connection portion includes an interior surface for receiving a vacuum source and an exterior surface for cooperation with the small end of the holder wherein insertion of the vacuum source into the connecting portion biases the exterior surface of the connecting portion against the small end of the holder to hold the breast cup in the holder;

a cylindrical middle area formed adjacent to the connecting portion, and configured for receiving a teat of a breast; and

a cone shaped portion formed adjacent to the middle area, and configured for receiving a portion of the breast, the cone shaped portion increasing in diameter away from the middle portion to the large open end, and supported proximal to the large open end by the large end of the holder,

wherein the breast cup assembly is formed by inserting the breast cup into the holder wherein a fastening wedge on the connecting portion of the breast cup catches on a complementary ridge of the small end of the holder to retain the breast cup in the holder.

65. A breast cup assembly comprising:

a bottle cap having a hollow male extension and a vacuum attachment section ~~attachment end for connecting to a vacuum source;~~

~~a large open end opposite the bottle attachment end for accepting a woman's breast;~~

a holder comprising:

a small end residing proximal to the bottle cap attachment end ~~of the breast cup assembly;~~

a large end opposite the small end and having a larger diameter than the small end; and

a center portion connecting the small end to the large end, the center portion having at least one cut out ~~air-path~~ passing radially through the holder to allow free movement inside the holder;

a single layer breast cup made of biocompatible material and supported inside the holder, the breast cup having an inner surface exposed to a ~~the~~ vacuum source and an outer surface exposed to atmospheric pressure, the breast cup sequentially comprising;

a connecting portion residing proximal to the bottle attachment end of the breast cup assembly and supported by the small end of the holder; the connecting portion receiving the ~~a~~ hollow male extension connecting the breast cup to the vacuum source;

a cylindrical middle area formed contiguous to the connecting portion and configured for receiving a teat of a breast and having a first thickness; and

a cone shaped portion formed contiguous to the middle area, and configured for receiving a portion of the breast, the cone shaped portion increasing in diameter away from the middle area to the large open end, and supported proximal to ~~the large open end by~~ the large end of the holder, the cone shaped portion having a second thickness,

wherein the second thickness is less than the first thickness so that upon application of vacuum to the connecting portion the cone shaped portion collapses and then the cylindrical middle area collapses thereby mimicking the suckling of an infant.

Reasons for Allowance

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The subject matter of the independent claims could either not be found or was not suggested in the prior art of record. The subject matter not found for claims 43, 55, and 60 deal with a breast cup assembly with a bottle attachment end that is attached to a holder that has a complementary ridge or an engaging feature that corresponds to a fastening wedge catches or a cup engagement feature that allows the breast cup to be held in place in the breast cup assembly.

With regards to claim 65 the subject matter not found was a hollow male extension that is on the bottle cap and is received in the connecting portion of the breast cup so that the vacuum source is connected to the breast cup.

The independent claims also include other patentable subject matter in combination with the other elements or steps of the claim not mention in the above paragraph.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MATTHEW F. DESANTO whose telephone number is (571)272-4957. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nick LUCCHESI can be reached on (571) 272-4977. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Matthew F DeSanto/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3763